REMARKS

By the above actions, claim 1 has been amended. In view of the actions taken and the following remarks, reconsideration of this application is now requested.

Claims 1 & 2 have been rejected under 35 USC § 102 as being anticipated by the disclosure of the Okamoto et al. patent. However, in making this rejection, the Examiner has either misconstrued claim 1 or misinterpreted the disclosure of the Okamoto et al. patent. That is, in the present case, the emission frequency of the fluorescent lamp is identical with the frequency of the flashing signal (see, Fig. 4 and the corresponding description). On the other hand, this is not the case for the Okamoto et al. patent where the power supply of the lamp produces an emission command signal for the lamp after receipt of an external synchronization signal, and the starts lamp emission at an emission frequency that is a multiple of the frequency of the external signal but is not the same as it. While it is applicant's view that the "directly corresponds" language is synonymous with being equal or the same as, since it appears that the Examiner has construed this language differently, claim 1 has been amended to indicate that "emission of the fluorescent lamp with a frequency which is the same as the frequency of the flashing signal." As such, the Okamoto et al. patent is not anticipative of the claimed invention, so that this rejection should be withdrawn and such action is hereby requested.

It is also noted that the Okamoto et al. patent is not usable as prior art against the claims of the present application in accordance with 35 USC § 103(c). That is, the Okamoto et al. patent issued on November 19, 2002, and subsequent to the December 14, 2002 filing date of the present application. Furthermore, this application and the Okamoto et al. reference were, at the time the invention was made, owned by, or subject to an obligation of assignment to, the same organization, i.e., Ushiodenki Kabushiki Kaisha. As a result, the Okamoto et al. patent *only* qualifies as prior art under 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) (i.e., not 35 U.S.C. 102(a) or (b)) and thus is disqualified as prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(c); see, MPEP § 706.02(l)(3).

While this application should now be in condition for allowance, in the event that any issues should remain after consideration of this response which could be addressed through

discussions with the undersigned, then the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned by telephone for that purpose.

Respectfully submitted,

By: _____
David S. Safran
Registration No. 27,997

Roberts Mlotkowski & Hobbes P.C
PO Box 10064
McLean, VA 22102

Direct Telephone: (703) 584-3273

DSS:kmm